

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3214
INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
USCINCLANT NORFOLK VA
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 CARACAS 7036

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR PGOV PINT VE
SUBJECT: THIS WEEK IN VENEZUELA

REF: (A) CARACAS 6847, (B) CARACAS 6297, (C) CARACAS 6565

SUMMARY: ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS: HERRERA REGISTERS
OFFICIALLY AS CANDIDATE; GOV LOSES ANOTHER ROUND TO THE
SUPREME ELECTORAL COUNCIL; TOO MUCH PUBLICITY. COLOMBIAN
PRESIDENT-ELECT TURBAY VISITS VENEZUELA. ARRIA REJECTS
VENEZUELA'S THIRD WORLD ROLE IN CAMPAIGN SPEECH. CAP
REITERATES PLEDGE TO CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND. ELECTION
POLITICS DISRUPT JOURNALIST CONVENTION. END SUMMARY.

1. ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS: HERRERA REGISTERS OFFICIALLY
AS CANDIDATE; GOV LOSES ANOTHER ROUND TO THE SUPREME
ELECTORAL COUNCIL; TOO MUCH PUBLICITY.
BEFORE A PACKED AUDIENCE IN THE CHAMBER OF THE SUPREME
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ELECTORAL COUNCIL (CSE) JULY 26, COPEI CANDIDATE LUIS
HERRERA CAMPINS OFFICIALLY REGISTERED AS HIS PARTY'S
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. HE ALSO REGISTERED AS THE CANDIDATE
FOR THE UNION REPUBLICANA DEMOCRATICA (URD), FUERZA DEMOCRATICA
POPULAR (FDP), AND OPINION NACIONAL (OPINA) PARTIES
(REF B). IN A SEPARATE DEVELOPMENT INVOLVING THE CSE,
THE COUNCIL DECIDED TO REJECT A GOV CHALLENGE TO THE

LEGALIZATION OF THE RADICAL "SOCIALIST LEAUGE" AS A REGIONAL POLITICAL PARTY, STATING THE PARTY HAD SUFFICIENT SIGNATURES TO BE REGISTERED IN EIGHT STATES AND TWO TERRITORIES. FINALLY, THE CSE JULY 27 SLAPPED THE WRISTS OF ARRIA, PINERUA AND HERRERA BECAUSE THEIR TV CAMPAIGN PUBLICITY GREATLY EXCEEDED THE FIVE MINUTES PER DAY PERMITTED BY THE CSE. THE CSE SAID IT IS APPROACHING THE TV STATIONS IN THIS MATTER. COMMENT: DURING THE CEREMONY HERRERA REITERATED HIS CAMPAIGN THEME THAT THE BROAD BACKING FROM FOUR PARTIES MAKES HIM A "NATIONAL CANDIDATE." BOLSTERED BY THE DATOS POLL OF TWO WEEKS AGO (REF C), CALDERA'S RENEWED PARTICIPATION IN THE CAMPAIGN, AND A SENSE THAT HIS CAMPAIGN MAY HAVE FINALLY BEGUN TO JELL, HERRERA IN RECENT DAYS IS SHOWING A SENSE OF CONFIDENCE LACKING IN THE PAST. IN REALITY, SUPPORT OF THE FDP AND OPINA PARTIES BRINGS FEW VOTES (15,000 MAXIMUM) BUT ALLOWS HERRERA TO CLAIM A NATIONAL CONSTITUENCY. COPEI, HOWEVER, CALCULATES THAT THE URD YELLOW BANNER WILL BRING IN SOME 50,000 VOTES, PARTICULARLY FROM THE EAST WHERE URD FOUNDER VILLALBA RETAINS SOME POPULARITY. THE CSE DECISION ON THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE WAS CLEAR REBUKE TO INTERIOR MINISTER LEPAGE, WHO ON THE DAY OF THE DECISION REPRINTED HIS OFFICIAL CHALLENGE TO THE CSE IN THE LOCAL PRESS TO DEMONSTRATE THE GOV'S CONCERN. THE DECISION WAS THE SECOND CONSECUTIVE SETBACK IN AS MANY WEEKS (REF A) FOR THE GOV AT THE HANDS OF THE OPPOSITION-CONTROLLED CSE. LEPAGE TOLD THE PRESS THAT THE GOV WILL APPEAL THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DECISION TO THE COURTS, BUT WOULD ABIDE BY THE RULING FOR THE TIME BEING. THE INTERIOR MINISTRY AND STATE SECURITY SERVICES ARE CONVINCED THAT THE SOCIALIST LEAGUE IS NOT A LEGITIMATE POLITICAL PARTY AND INDEED LITTLE MORE THAN A FRONT FOR THE FAR-LEFT INSURGENCY GROUP "ORGANIZATION OF REVOLUTIONARIES" (OR). WITH TWO COUR CHALLENGES FAVORING THE CSE, THE PRESIDENT HAS BEEN CAREFUL TO STATE THAT SUCH DEVELOPMENTS ARE NORMAL UNDER THE VENEZUELAN LEGAL SYSTEM AND SHOULD SHOCK NO ONE. WHILE UNDER PRESSURE, THE CSE IS UNLIKELY TO CHANGE DIRECTION SINCE THE OPPOSITION CONSIDERS IT THE CHIEF BULWARK AGAINST THE PARTY IN POWER RESTORING TO HIGH-HANDED TACTICS IF NOT OUTRIGHT FRAUD DURING THE ELECTION.

2. COLOBIAN PRESIDENT -ELECT TURBAY VISITS VENEZUELA. COLOMBIAN PRESIDENT-ELECT JULIO CEASAR TURBAY ARRIVED IN VENEZUELA FOR A THREE-DAY GOODWILL VISIT JULY 23-26. ON JULY 24 HE ACCOMPANIED PRESIDENT PEREX TO ZULIA STATE TO ATTEND EVENTS COMMEMORATING THE NAVAL BATTLE OF MARACAIBO AND ANNIVERSARY OF THE VENEZUELAN NAVY, AND LATER HELD TALKS WITH PEREZ ON THE STATUS OF THE ANDEAN PACT, THE ILLEGAL LABOR IMMIGRATION PROBLEM FROM COLOMBIA TO VENEZUELA, AND THE OUTSTANDING VENEZUELAN-COLOMBIAN SEA BOUNDARY DISPUTE,

ALL OF WHICH WERE MENTIONED IN A BLAND JOINT COMMUNIQUE COMMITTING BOTH COUNTRIES TO JOINT "ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND SOLUTION OF COMMON PROBLEMS." TURBAY SUBSEQUENTLY MET WITH THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES OF THE TWO MAJOR POLITICAL PARTIES, ACCION DEMOCRATICA AND COPEI AND FONMIN CONSALVI, AND MADE CALLS ON FORMER PRESIDENTS RAFAEL CALDERA AND ROMULO BETANCOURT. UPON TURBAY'S DEPARTURE, PEREZ NOTED IN STATEMENTS TO PRESS THAT THE RESOLUTION OF THE DEFERENDO BOUNDARY DISPUTE HAS BEEN HOBBOLED BY THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN. COMMENT: TURBAY MADE A GOOD IMPRESSION HERE, WITH HIS LOW-KEY STATEMENTS ON THE "DIFERENDO" AND EMPAHSIS ONWORKING TOWARD SOLUTIONS TO EMIGRATION AND COOPERATION. TO NO ONE'S SURPRISE, PEREZ VIRTUALLY ADMITTED THAT (BECAUSE OF THE ELECTION CAMPAIGN) TIME HAS RUN OUT FOR HIM TO SETTLE THE "DIFERENDO."
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3. ARRIA REJECTS THIRD WORLD ROLE IN CAMPAIGN SPEECH. IN A MAJOR CAMPAIGN FOREIGN POLICY SPEECH, INDEPENDENT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE DIEGO ARRIA REJECTED VENELZUELA'S ROLE AS SPOKESMAN FOR THE 3RD WORLD. CHARACTERIZING THE 3RD WORLD AS AN ARBITRARY GROUPING OF COUNTRIES WITH DIVERGENT INTERESTS AND A NEBULOUS COMMON AIM, HE SAID THAT VENEZUELA SHOULD REJECT THE ROLE OF 3RD WORLD PALADIN SINCE IT COMPLICATES VENEZUELA'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

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ACTION ARA-14

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11

AID-05 PC-01 IO-13 ACDA-12 OMB-01 TRSE-00 HA-05

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R 281743Z JUL 78

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

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HE ALSO CRITICIZED THE GOVERNMENT'S HANDLING OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT POLICIES AS ERRATIC AND A PRINCIPAL CAUSE FOR THE SLOWDOWN OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN THE COUNTRY. DISMISSING THE SPECTER OF TRANSNATIONAL INTERFERENCE IN THE NATIONAL ECONOMY, HE CITED TECHNOLOGICAL DEPENDENCE AS VENEZUELA'S REAL PROBLEM, BUT NOTED THAT FOREIGN INVESTMENT WAS THE ANSWER TO OBTAINING TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS AND THUS CONSOLIDATING VENEZUELA'S INDEPENDENCE. COMMENT: ARRIA'S FOREIGN POLICY STATEMENT DIVERGES SHARPLY FROM THE POSITIONS OF THE MAJOR CANDIDATES, AND PARTICULARLY WITH THAT OF HIS PREVIOUS MENTOR, PRESIDENT PEREZ. IN PART DESIGNED TO SEPARATE HIS CANDIDACY FROM THE REST OF THE PACK AND GIVE A BOOST TO HIS FALTERING CAMPAIGN, ARRIA'S PRONOUNCEMENT ALSO ACCURATELY REFLECTS HIS PERSONAL POLITICAL VIEWS WHICH ARE PRO-BUSINESS, AND QUITE ANTI-STATIST. END COMMENT.

4. CAP REITERATES PLEDGE TO CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT FUND.
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DURING A PRESS CONFERENCE IN PARAMARAIBO, SURINAM, VENEZUELAN PRESIDENT CARLOS ANDRES PEREZ REITERATED PUBLICLY THE GOV'S SUPPORT FOR THE CARIBBEAN COOPERATIVE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVE. ACCORDING TO PRESS REPORTS, CAP CONFIRMED THAT THE GOV WAS PREPARED TO CONTRIBUTE AN AMOUNT EQUAL TO 10 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL PLEDGED BY ALL COUNTRIES TO THE SPECIAL FUND, UP TO A LIMIT OF \$30 MILLION ANNUALLY. IDEALLY, HE SAID, THE FUND SHOULD RECEIVE \$300 MILLION ANNUALLY FROM CONTRIBUTORS OVER A FIVE YEAR PERIOD, FOR A TOTAL OF \$1.5 BILLION, HE EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT THAT ONLY \$125 MILLION HAD BEEN PLEDGED, AND CRITICIZED THE INDUSTRIAL COUNTRIES (SPECIFICALLY EXCEPTING THE UNITED STATES) FOR CONTRIBUTING LITTLE OR NOTHING TO CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT.

5. ELECTION POLITICS DISRUPT JOURNALIST CONVENTION.
THE EMBASSY HAS LEARNED THAT COPEI AND AD FORCES IN THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF JOURNALISTS (CNP) WILL PATCH UP DIFFERENCES AND ASSURE MODERATE CONTROL OF THE IMPORTANT MEDIA LABOR FEDERATION FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 18 YEARS. COPEI CRITICISM AT THE CNP CONVENTION WITH WEEK OF THE AD GOVERNMENT'S ALLEGED ABUSE OF THE MEDIA FOR POLITICAL PURPOSES (SEE ITEM ONE) PROMPTED AN AD WALK-OUT FROM THE CONVENTION AND THREATENED THE INTEGRITY OF THE VICTORIOUS COPEI/AD SLATE OF OFFICERS. THE COALITION HAD

PRODUCED FOUR SEATS ON THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE FOR AD INCLUDING CNP PRESIDENT-ELECT PEDRO FRANCISCO LIZARDO, THREE SEATS FOR COPEI AND ONLY ONE EACH FOR THE LEFTIST MAS PARTY AND THE VENEZUELAN COMMUNIST PARTY (PCV). RETENTION OF MAJOR PARTIES FROM A LEFTIST COALITION LED BY CNP'S PAST PRESIDENT AND PCV PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE HECTOR MUJICA.

6. OTHER REPORTING THIS WEEK INCLUDED: VENEZUELAN STATEMENT ON BOLIVIAN SITUATION (CARACAS 6893 AND 6876), VENEZUELAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT ASKS PRESIDENT CARTER TO CONSIDER ASKING OAS TO URGE THAT NEW ELECTIONS BE HELD IN BOLIVIA (CARACAS 6877).

REPORTING REQUIREMENT: SECTION 36(A)(7) OF ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT - VENEZUELA (CARACAS 6846), PRE-33RD UNGA CONSULTATIONS OF DAS BARRY (CARACAS 6958), HOST COUNTRY MILITARY TRAINING - VENEZUELA (CARACAS 6990), CIVAIR: REPORTED MULTILATERAL COMMITMENT TO RESIST US INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORTATION POLICY (CARACAS 6844), VENEZUELA-CVG SIDERURGICA DEL ORINOCO (CARACAS 6816), CENTRAL BANK APPROVES INTEREST RATE INCREASES (CARACAS 6950). CROWLEY

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